

# WAR AND TAXATION. THE *SOLDADAS* FROM THE REIGN OF ALFONSO VIII OF CASTILE TO THE 13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

CARLOS ESTEPA  
CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS  
SPAIN

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the issue of the *soldadas* (salaries or stipends) from the kingdom of Alfonso VIII onwards, focusing on the testimonies from chronicles, mainly the *Crónica Latina de los Reyes de Castilla* and *De rebus Hispaniae* by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada. The *soldadas* (*stipendia*) as cash payments for the knights (*milites*) are the key element to notice the narrow link between war and taxation. The matter should be framed in the wider question of the growth of royal taxation, which is very important yet in the kingdom of Alfonso VIII. One century later, the Rents from Sancho IV (1290-1292) allow us to deduce the large expense of the *soldadas*, for instance in Andalusian cities, as well as the large amounts given to the main nobles (*ricos hombres*) to be shared among their men.

## KEYWORDS

Salaries, Chronicles, King, Knights, Higher Nobility.

## CAPITALIA VERBA

Stipendia, Chronicae, Rex, Milites, Nobilitas Excellentior, Prima Nobilitas.

Without resorting to the almost stereotypical expression that medieval Spanish society was a society for war, it is no less certain that war in its various manifestations was an essential element in it.<sup>1</sup> Taxation was undoubtedly heavily conditioned by war, given the necessities that this generated and that affected especially the warriors or *milites* who made up the backbone of an army.<sup>2</sup>

The aim here is to tackle the subject of taxation and war, especially in the period coinciding with the long reign of Alfonso VIII of Castile (1158-1214), but also using later information to provide better knowledge of the interpenetration of war and taxation, while also applying a comparative analysis.

## 1. Royal taxation under Alfonso VIII

The reign of Alfonso VIII (1158-1214) was very important for the growth of royal taxation. This aspect and how the consolidation of certain tributes established the bases for the later development of taxation has been highlighted elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> This is taken into consideration as the framework for this study. On the other hand, it seems timely to take the fact that war conditioned the development of royal taxation during this important reign as the starting point for this analysis.

There is a problem of sources when studying the theme of war and taxation. Information from this epoch on fiscal aspects is usually scant. For example, among the 1,824 royal diplomas published by the Capet monarch Phillip Augustus (1180-1223) only 101 contain details of economic value.<sup>4</sup> Of the 957 valid diplomas from Alfonso VIII's reign, there are 351, in other words slightly over a third, with some fiscal contents.<sup>5</sup> This, which initially seems very important for this study, merits some comment.

Among these, diplomas the most abundant are those that contain more or less general exemptions. There is a total of 142 such documents. They are most frequently used to know what the tax payments were, as the different charges were named when establishing an exemption. There are also numerous charters that contain an exemption from the *portazgo* (toll) (67), the payment of some benefit or tax (56) and

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1. See the classic article by Lourie, Elena. "A society organised for war: Medieval Spain". *Past & Present*, 35 (1966): 54-76.

2. For war in Christian Spain during the Early and High Middle Ages see Isla, Amancio. *Ejército, sociedad y política en la Península Ibérica entre los siglos VII y XI*. Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, Secretaría General Técnica-Consejo Superior de Investigación Científicas, 2010; García Fitz, Francisco. *Castilla y León frente al Islam. Estrategias de expansión y tácticas militares (siglos XI-XIII)*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2001; García Fitz, Francisco. *Relaciones políticas y guerra. La experiencia castellano-leonesa frente al Islam. Siglos XI-XIII*. Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002.

3. Estepa, Carlos. "La construcción de la fiscalidad real", *Poder real y sociedad: estudios sobre el reinado de Alfonso VIII (1188-1214)*, Carlos Estepa, Ignacio Álvarez, José María Santamarta, eds. Leon: Universidad de León, 2011: 65-94.

4. Ehlers, Joachim. *Geschichte Frankreichs im Mittelalter*. Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges, 2009: 143.

5. Estepa, Carlos. "Construcción...": 89 (table).



the granting of *portazgos* (46). Exemptions from military duty appear in 56 diplomas, but this, as we shall see in the case of the *fonsadera*,<sup>6</sup> may not necessarily be linked to the theme under study here. There are concession of salt pans registered in 40 of the royal diplomas, general grants of royal income in 36 and concession on taxes in 32 of these documents.<sup>7</sup>

Still, the most important evidence for us comes from the eight diplomas that contain assignments of royal incomes, especially the diploma from 1173 (July, 30) regarding the *stipendia* (or *soldadas*) to the *fratres* of the Order of Santiago.<sup>8</sup>

However, the narrative sources offer us information about the *stipendia* or payments to warriors. We can mention the passages dedicated to these in the *Crónica Latina de los Reyes de Castilla* and the *De rebvs Hispaniae* by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, both written during the reign of Ferdinand III, King of Castile from 1217 and King of León from 1230.<sup>9</sup> Special mention must be made of a passage by Jiménez de Rada about what Alfonso VIII awarded to the foreign warriors who took part in the campaign that culminated in the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1212. This is interesting but it contains enormous exaggerations and distortions, as the text implies that the Castilian king spent something like three and a half million gold *maravedíes* on this campaign, on only what was paid to the foreign crusaders. One should only take into consideration the qualitative aspects of evidence of this type, while it is also relevant to compare these with other cases of payments of large amounts.

Jiménez de Rada's work also contains other passages where the term *stipendia* is used. On describing the actions of the Aragonese troops under Alfonso I (1104-1134) in León, contextualising their sacrilegious pillage, he tells us, "et licet incliti essent predis, tamen ceperunt defecti pecunie stipendia minorari".<sup>10</sup> The term also appears when referring to the Abbot of Fitero who brought herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and many utensils to Calatrava "necnon et multitudinem bellatorum, quibus stipendia et uatica ministravit".<sup>11</sup> In both examples, *stipendia* is used in a technical sense for the payments to warriors, either by the king or another person who leads them. Moreover, in the second case, there is a distinction between this payment and the supply or granting of other goods necessary for the working of the army, here using the term *viatico*. On the other hand, there is a use of *stipendia*, in a general sense as a payment or salary, which has a wide meaning and that thus does

6. The *fonsadera* was a tribute or loan granted to the king for the purpose of enabling him to defray the expenses of a war.

7. As it is obvious that a document can contain more than one of the items presented in the whole.

8. González, Julio. *El reino de Castilla en la época de Alfonso VIII*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1960: II, 307-308 (doc. No. 184).

9. *Crónica Latina de los Reyes de Castilla*, ed. Luis Charlo. Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz, 1984; Roderici Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebvs Hispanie sive Historia Gothica*, ed. Juan Fernández. Turnhout: Brepols, 1987. Regarding to the translation we always used here that was done by Charlo Brea in mentioned work or that was done by Fernández Valverde in: *Historia de los hechos de España*, ed. Juan Fernández. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989.

10. Rodericii Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebus...*: VII, chap. II.

11. Rodericii Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebus...*: VII, chap. XIII.



not necessarily always refer to military functions. Jiménez de Rada uses it for the masters from the nascent Estudio de Palencia:

*...et magistros omnium facultatum Palencie congregavit, quibus et magna stipendia est largitus, ut omni studium cupienti quasi manna in os influeret sapientia cuiuslibet facultatis.*<sup>12</sup>

The evidence in Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada's work denotes a use of the military *stipendia* in the epoch when he was writing, which would not necessarily have to apply to earlier epochs. However, in the mentioned cases it can be taken as fully valid in the sense that there really were such *stipendia* or cash payments in the times referred to. The news about a fall in these payments in the case of the Aragonese troops is very revealing, although it should be borne in mind that the emphasis is placed on explaining that that the great pillaging that the chronicler describes took place was due to the Aragonese.

For Sánchez-Albornoz, there were assignments *in stipendio datas*<sup>13</sup> in the Visigoth epoch, but it is very unlikely that these were earlier than the credit concessions that were seen later in Castile and León. Moreover, in any case, the *stipendia* we mention were payments in cash, so they were only possible if cash was available. It seems plausible to think that the development of the system of *parias* in the 11<sup>th</sup> century facilitated the phenomenon of the stipendiary payments or *soldadas*.<sup>14</sup> In any case, military service by royal vassals from the Astur period meant that they would have received payments or *soldadas*.

In Alfonso VIII's charter to the Order of Santiago in 1173, the order was granted 5% of the stipends from the *militibus* and other vassals, so 2,5 by 50 auri, 5 by 100 auri.<sup>15</sup> This not only shows an important grant to the privileged but also that, and this is what most interests us here, there was a system whereby the vassals of the nobility receiving *soldadas* in cash, registered here as *milites* and others.<sup>16</sup> In my opinion, this system must already have been well consolidated to enable a precise figure to be set for the amount.

On the other hand, we can ask if there were any link between the *soldadas* and the *fonsadera*. As is well known, the *fonsadera* was the tribute that replaced the provision of going to the *fonsado*, this being understood as the general obligation of free men

12. Rodericii Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebus...*: VII, chap. XXXVIII.

13. Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. *El "stipendium" hispano-godo y los orígenes del beneficio prefeudal*. Buenos Aires: Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, 1947; *Estudios Visigodos*. Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1971: 253-375.

14. The *parias* are linked to the payments of *soldadas* in Grassotti, Hilda. *Las instituciones feudovasalláticas en León y Castilla*. Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1969: II, 738 and following.

15....*computationem de stipendiis quecumque militibus uel aliis uasallis meis erogauero, scilicet, de quinquaginta aureis, duos et dimidium, et de centum, quinque, et deinceps secundum huius computationem.*

16. In reality, given that *milites* meant the whole nobility but especially its lower level, the others would be the highest level among the nobles.



to join the host called by the King.<sup>17</sup> Sánchez-Albornoz considered that this switch took place in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century given that for this distinguished historian such a tribute appeared in documents from the 920s.<sup>18</sup> However, these are falsifications. The *fonsadera* does not appear in the Astur period and I am inclined to think that this change did not take place until the reign of Alfonso VI (1065-1109), it being then when we find the tribute known as *fonsadera* becoming generalised.<sup>19</sup> With the appearance of the *fonsadera*, this would not be paid by the *infanzones*, the lesser nobility, and in general, those who were beginning to take the form of nobles, and these privileges would also extend to the *caballería villana* (non-noble cavalry). Regarding the military demands, we can say that while the nobles served the King as *militēs*, other free men would pay the *fonsadera*. However, it should be noted that since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, there were abundant exemptions from paying the *fonsadera* for the men in non-royal lordships.

With the appearance of the so-called *señoríos de behetría* lordships, the situation could arise that the men from these were exempt from the *fonsadera*, as their possible military duties were fulfilled by their lords and their knights known as *deviseros*, who fulfilled the military functions. This was reflected in the *Libro Becerro de las Behetrías* from 1352 and, with the same justification, the same was also said about the lordships of the Military Orders.<sup>20</sup>

All this leads us to assert that there was no relation between the payments of the *soldadas* and the *fonsadera* that the payment of the *soldadas* came from the *fonsadera*. Some specific circumstances must only be taken in consideration in the case of the *caballería villana* in the Extremaduras.

Thus, the *Crónica de la población de Ávila*, a text dating from the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>21</sup> contains a passage about the beginning of Alfonso X's reign, in which it can be deduced that the knights of Ávila could receive part of the war tribute called *fonsadera* paid by those who did not join the host, part of which, in this case, was received by the monarch himself<sup>22</sup> We can note even more clearly that the privilege

17. García de Valdeavellano, Luis. *Curso de historia de las instituciones españolas. De los orígenes a la Baja Edad Media*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1968: 621-622.

18. Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. "El ejército y la guerra en el reino asturleonés", *Ordinamenti militari in Occidente nell' alto Medioevo, XV Settimana di Spoleto*. Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1968: I, 293-428.

19. Estepa, Carlos. "En torno a la fonsadera y a las cargas de origen público". *Stvdia Historica. Historia Medieval*, 30 (2012): 25-41.

20. Martínez, Gonzalo, ed. *Libro Becerro de las Behetrías*. Leon: Centro de Estudios e Investigación "San Isidoro", 1981; Estepa, Carlos. *Las behetrías castellanas*. Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2003: I, 240-242.

21. *Crónica de la población de Ávila*, ed. Amparo Hernández. Valencia: Editorial Anubar, 1966. Sobre esta obra, Gautier-Dalche, Jean. "Fiction, réalité et idéologie dans le *Cronica de la población de Ávila*". *Razo. Cahiers d'Etudes Médiévales*, 1 (1979): 24-32.

22. *E llegaron todos a Ellón, assí que ovieron y una carta del rey que se tornasen los moros a Avila, e quel diesen dos mill maravedís. E los cavalleros entendieron que sería gran deservio del rey si se tornasen los moros, e entendiendo que el rey avie menester los dineros, ovieron su acuerdo e embiaron a Gómez Nuñós e a Gonçalo Matheos al rey, que era en Vitoria, quel pidiessen merçed, quel pidiessen que los moros fuesen en su servio; e ya que los dineros mucho menester los avie, que embiase luego a Avila a cojer la fonsadera de los que non pudieron venir en la hueste, e que abrió él luego los sus dineros. E en razón de aquellos dos mill maravedís, que le quitavan los caballeros la meatad de*



granted by Alfonso X to the councils of Extremadura in 1263, under which the *caballeros villanos* became direct and exclusive vassals of the king or the crown prince and had to receive an annual salary of 500 shillings as a vassal.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. The payment of salaries (*soldadas*) in the narrative sources

We now refer to the passages in the narrative sources that refer to the payment of salaries by Alfonso VIII, for the campaign of Las Navas. The most explicit text is the one transmitted by D. Rodrigo in chapter IV of book VIII of his *Historia*:

*...Cum enim essent ultramontani plusquam decem milia equitum et centum milia peditum, unicuique militi dabantur omni die XX<sup>ii</sup> solidos usuales, pediti uero V<sup>o</sup> solidi; mulieres, paruuli, debiles et ceteri ad bellum inepti non erant ab hac gracia alieni. Hec erant que in comuni et publice donabantur, preter donaria priuata, que sui quantitate hunc numerum excedebant, que magnatibus non diurna distribucione, set pociori summa per nobilis regis nuncios mitebantur. Hiis muneribus cumulabatur equorum innumerosa generositas, pannorum iocunda uarietas, que omnia tenacitatis curua seueritas uultu propicio non poterat intueri. Hiis autem omnibus si iungantur regibus oblata donaria, suis distribuita stipendia, plus modus dantis et ylaritas meruit quam hiis omnibus emi possit. Et ad hec omnia, ne gens alienigena expeditionis omnibus indigeret, omnibus tentoria et eorum uehacula est largitus. Addidit etiam graciam gracie et cibariorum uehacula cum ceteris necessariis, LX<sup>a</sup> milia summas et ultra cum sumariis erogauit.<sup>24</sup>*

As mentioned above, the amount that can be deduced from this description, and that would only be have been part of the amount paid out, would have been around three and a half million maravedies, a figure that which we can qualify, without any qualms, as impossible, as it would suppose a disproportionate numbers of fighters for a 13<sup>th</sup>-century army. As a comparison, we can state that in the Crusade in 1195-1197, Emperor Henry VI (1190-1197) gave 30 ounces of gold (around 840 gr.) for each knight, as well as annual maintenance for this and two squires, and 10 ounces (280 gr.) for each foot-soldier, with annual maintenance. There were 1,500 knights

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*la fonsadera que ellos devién aver, en que avríe muchos más dineros que estos, ca por sabor de levar gran gente en la hueste non quissieron levar excusados ningunos* (And they all arrived in Ellón, having received a letter from the king [saying that] the Moors were returning to Avila, and that they should give him 2000 *maravedís*. And the knights understood that it would be a great disservice to the king if the Moors returned, and understanding that the king needed the money, they come to an agreement and sent Gómes Nuñós and Gonçalo Matheos to the king, who was in Vitoria, to ask for his mercy, to ask that the Moors be in their service; and since he had great need of that money, that he might afterwards send them to Avila to collect the war tribute (*fonsadera*) from those who could not join the army and that he would afterwards have his money. And because of those 2000 *maravedís*, that the knights took half of the war tribute which they ought to have, whereby they would have much more money than this, because they brought many people in the army they did not want to let anyone excuse themselves) (Hernández, Amparo. *Crónica de la población de Ávila*: 47).

23. González, Manuel. *Alfonso X el Sabio*. Barcelona: Ariel, 2004: 160.

24. Rodericii Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebus...*: VIII, chap. IV.



and if we calculate some 4,000 foot-soldiers, more acceptable figures, the payments rose to a total of 2,380 kg. of gold, equivalent to around 600,000 gold maravedies.<sup>25</sup> A similar amount was the 100,000 silver marks initially demanded as a ransom for Richard I after his imprisonment by the Leopold V, Duke of Austria, and the Emperor Henry VI (1193) that were equivalent to about 20,000 kg of silver. It was later agreed to pay 150,000 marks (30,000 kg) of silver.<sup>26</sup>

The text I present from the *Crónica Latina de los Reyes de Castilla* does not give the number of combatants or what each knight or foot-soldier received, but rather it gives a general description of the payments made and the *soldadas* received, as well as the payment of half the incomes of the clergy:<sup>27</sup>

*Dum conuenirent nobiles et populi regis Castelle et regis Aragonum, cunctis, qui uenerant de Pictauiā et de Vasconia et de Prouincia et de aliis partibus et ipsi regi Aragonum, expensas omnes nobilis rex Castelle sufficienter ministrabat. Ubi tanta copia auri effundebatur cotidie quam uix et numeratores et ponderatores multitudinem denariorum qui necessarii erant ad expensas poterant numerare.*

*Uniuersus clerus regni Castelle ad petitionem regni medietatem omnium reddituum suorum in eodem anno concesserant domino regi.*

*Preter stipendia cotidiana regi Aragonum multam sumam pecunie misit antequam ipse de regno suo exiret: pauper enim erat et multis debitis obligatus nec sine adiutorio regis Castelle potuisset militibus suis, qui eum sequi debebant, stipendia necessaria largiri.*<sup>28</sup>

In these *Crónicas*, as well as the texts related to the Battle of Las Navas, we must also highlight some other points. Jiménez de Rada suggests that in 1217, on the death of Henry I and the crowning of Ferdinand III as king of Castile, royal income to pay *soldadas* was running out, so that Queen Berenguela had to resort to her wealth in precious metals and jewels:

*Verum quia perturbatione huiusmodi obsistente regales redditus ad stipendia defecerunt, et regina nobilis quicquid habuerat in largicionibus dispensarat, ad argenti et auri et gemmarum donaria misit manum et queque ex talibus reseruauat in auxilium filii liberaliter erogauit...*<sup>29</sup>

This passage that can be assessed as Jiménez de Rada wanting to extol the generosity of the queen, but it may not be very reliable regarding income and *soldadas*. However, it seems reasonable to suggest that it is proof that these were usually paid.

25. Jericke, Hartmut. *Kaiser Heinrich VI., der unbekannte Staufer*. Gleichen: Muster-Schmidt, 2008: 79.

26. Jericke, Hartmut. *Kaiser Heinrich VI...: 59-62*.

27. I have a different interpretation than Charlo Brea's Spanish translation. I think that we must understand *populi* as people; *stipendia* as *soldadas* and *milites* as *wapirns* rather soldiers.

28. Charlo, Luis. *Crónica Latina de los Reyes...: 28*.

29. Roderici Ximenii de Rada. *Historia de rebus...: VIII, chap. VII*.



On dealing with the clash between Alfonso VIII and Alfonso IX of León shortly after Las Navas, the *Crónica Latina de los Reyes de Castilla* refers to the payment of *soldadas* (*stipendia*) to the nobles and the granting of great gifts (*munera magna*) to the magnates:

*Exinde uero dirigens iter suum in partes Castelle, cum unicum et sumum desiderium esset ei claudere diem extremum contra Sarracenos pro exultatione nominis Iesu Christi, uidens quod rex Legionis prestaret magnum impedimentum illi tam sancto proponito tamque laudabili, stipendia multa dedit nobilibus et munera magna magnatibus, conuocauitque multitudinem populorum innumerabilem ut saltem metu perterritus rex Legionis pacem firmaret cum rege glorioso et, si nollet iuuare ipsum, saltem non impediret.*<sup>30</sup>

### 3. The extension of royal taxation and the *soldadas*

If the payment of the *soldadas* to the nobles was important during Alfonso VIII's reign (1158-1214), some observations about the development of taxation during that period must also be made.

We can point out that the construction of royal taxation was feasible because in the 12<sup>th</sup> century saw a new economic base, an extension of the circulation of money, a monetisation that made it possible or facilitated not only commercial transactions but also the monarchy's financial requirements being channelled through monetary paths. Until Alfonso VIII's reign, the gold coins in circulation were the Almoravid dinars, which the Christians called *morabetinos*.<sup>31</sup> These were imitated in the first minting of maravedies, precisely, during the 1170s, when the supply of this metal stopped because of the end of the *parias* paid by the so-called Wolf King of Murcia. A maravedi minted in 1185, according to the most recent research, has attracted a great deal of attention. On it the Castilian king is named Prince of the Catholics, an expression with clear Islamic influence.<sup>32</sup>

The privilege Alfonso VIII gave to the Order de Santiago in 1173 assigning 5% of the amount of the *stipendia* to the nobles is undoubtedly a clear symptom of this important monetisation, and there is also other evidence.

30. Charlo, Luis. *Crónica Latina de los Reyes...*: 37.

31. Gil, Octavio. *Historia de la moneda española*. Madrid: Diana, 1959: 198-199.

32. Schramm, Percy Ernst. "Das kastilische Königtum und Kaisertum während der Reconquista (11. Jahrhundert bis 1252)", *Festschrift für Gerhard Ritter*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1950: 87-139 especially 130. The full text, written in Arabic, is, on one face *The Prince of the Catholics, Alfonso, son of Sancho, let him be helped and protected by God* and on the other *The imam of the Christian Church, the Pope of the old Rome*. Schramm interpreted that this *maravedi* was from 1175, in line with Sánchez-Albornoz (Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. "La primitiva organización monetaria de León y Castilla". *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, 5 (1928): 301-345, and in Sánchez-Albornoz, Claudio. *Estudios sobre las instituciones medievales españolas*. Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965: 441-477 especially 472), but it has recently been dated from 1185, Francisco, José María de. "El maravedí de oro de Alfonso VIII: un mensaje cristiano escrito en árabe". *Revista General de Información y Documentación*, 8/1 (1998): 283-301.



Along with the cities and towns granted to her, Alfonso VIII's pledge to his wife Leonor in 1170 included at least 5,000 coins per year from the incomes from Toledo.<sup>33</sup> Under the treaty of Seligenstadt, signed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1188, the marriage between Alfonso VIII's then heir, his daughter Berenguela, and Duke Conrad of Rothenburg, son of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (1152-1190) was arranged. The dowry was set at 42,000 auri, in other words 42,000 gold maravedies.<sup>34</sup> According to Alfonso VIII's will, written in 1204, the Castilian monarch had very heavy debts.<sup>35</sup> It is said that Queen Leonor owned a notebook listing the names of the creditors; the debt was 90,000 maravedies. It expressly mentions 18,000 maravedies that the executors had to pay to the *almojarife* Avomar. 6,000 had been paid and the other 12,000 was to be paid from the incomes from Toledo at a rate of 3,000 maravedies per year.

From an analysis of the fiscal liabilities from 1109 to 1230, we deduce that the two main axes in the construction of royal taxation were the *pecho* (*pectum*) and the *pedido* (*petitum*).<sup>36</sup> We identify the former as the *pecho de marzo* or *marzazga*, the first attempt to extend a royal tribute beyond the royal domains as an ordinary demand. It is another thing that the numerous exemptions, especially in the ecclesiastic lordships, made such a generalisation impossible, which would later become more effective through the *martinega* (a tax paid on Saint Martin's Day —11<sup>th</sup> November). On the other hand, the *pedido* was an extraordinary tax, that with time tended to become an ordinary tax and generally disappeared when Alfonso X (1252-1284) established the extraordinary services granted in the Courts.<sup>37</sup>

We have no data about the importance of the *pecho* and the *pedido* from the economic point of view. On the other hand, the many exemptions enables us to see how the vassals of ecclesiastic and lay lordships were not obliged to pay these tributes or that the tributes totally or partially passed to the lords. On this point, the idea that on occasions in the case of the *pedido* there was a dual distribution between the King and the lord seems acceptable. On the other hand, the tenants must also be taken into consideration as representatives of royal authority, receiving part of the rights generated in the tenures.

The most important taxes for the royal treasury from the economic point of view were probably those from the rights related to the traffic in merchandise and its sale, which generally we usually call *portazgos* (tolls), as well as the rights of this nature and the urban incomes in the kingdom of Toledo, especially in the city itself, that

33. González, Julio. *El reino de Castilla...*: I, 192.

34. González, Julio. *El reino de Castilla...*: II, 857-858 (doc. No. 499). About this treatise: Rassow, Peter. *Der Prinzgemahl, ein pactum matrimoniale aus dem Jahre 1188*. Weimar: H. Böhlau Nachfolger, 1950; Estepa, Carlos. "Concejos y monarquía en el reinado de Alfonso VIII: el pacto matrimonial de 1187-1188", *El historiador y la sociedad. Homenaje al profesor. Homenaje a José María Mínguez*, Pablo de la Cruz Díaz, Fernando Luis Corral, Iñaki Martín Viso, coord. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca, 2013: 67-75.

35. González, Julio. *El reino de Castilla...*: III, 335-336 (doc. No. 765).

36. In the above-mentioned work by Estepa, Carlos. "La construcción de la fiscalidad...".

37. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. *Fiscalidad y poder real en Castilla (1252-1369)*. Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 1993: 54.



were encompassed under the term of *almojarifazgos*.<sup>38</sup> These must have grown in importance in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. They contributed very significantly to the increase in royal resources.

The money and services constituted in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century as extraordinary contributions approved by the Court became the exclusive sources of royal taxation, demanded generally, both from those included in the royal domains and the vassals of the ecclesiastic and lay lordships and the *señoríos de behetría*. Logically, these would be vitally important for the assignment of *soldadas* and for what we can generally consider the financing of war through royal taxation.

However, we must not forget other rights and incomes of the Castilian monarchy. The *Rentas de Sancho IV* from 1290-1292, edited and studied in detail by Francisco J. Hernández, are a valuable source.<sup>39</sup> In these, the so-called *rentas ciertas* are made up of the royal incomes from *martiniegas* and rights, the *tercias* from the ecclesiastical tithes, the rights from salt pans and forges, the tributes from the Moorish and Jewish *aljamas* and the *almojarifazgos*.<sup>40</sup> The first section, the so-called *Rentas Reales*, was basically made up of *martiniegas* and rights, with 1,879,522 maravedies of war money, 40.02% (of 4,695,860.5 maravedies) of the total of the *Rentas Ciertas*. Of this amount, 1,159,170 maravedies were for the area of the Crown made up of Castile (Las Merindades), Castilian Extremadura, the Transierra and the Kingdom of Toledo. The royal *martiniega* made up 69.52% of the *Rentas Reales* in that area.

Indeed, the *Rentas* of 1290-1292 do not mention the extraordinary contributions, i.e. money and services, but do contain a section on the payment of salaries in Andalusia. Considering the characteristics of this source, we can make some observations on the subject in question. These *Rentas* enable us to deduce the level of organisation reached by royal taxation in the last decade of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, making it plausible to build a retrospective view of the situation during the preceding decades, including some items and clarification, although partial, about the times of Alfonso VIII.

The *Rentas* of 1290-1292 is not an accounting source, in other words, these are not really a register of incomes and expenses, but rather the incomes are also the expenses. The duties levied in one place for any reason were assigned to a specific person or institution, that could then pass it to others. Although the records and the detailed applications certainly denote a notable development in the administrative power of the Castilian monarchy, this does not serve so much to assess the level of organization as much as to perceive that the king's vassals benefited through fiscal resources.

The so-called *Rentas Reales* were said to be held by land (*por tierra*) or by inheritance (*por heredadamiento*). The latter referred to a hereditary assignment. This could be certain rights, for example the *martiniega* or part of this in a place, or

38. About these: González, José Damián. "Las rentas del almojarifazgo de Toledo". *Anales Toledanos*, 41 (2005): 39-70.

39. Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey. Sociedad y fisco en el reino castellano del siglo XIII*. Madrid: Fundación Areces, 1993, 3 vols.

40. Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey...*: I, 82.



the lordship over that place. What was held *por tierra* was the most habitual and indicated that for a particular constituency? For example in the documentation from a *meridad menor*, the names of the holders of money are stated after expressions like: *tienen los por tierra desta guisa*, or *son puestos en esta guisa*. In reality, receiving money *por tierra* was no more than the *tenencias*, if we look at a century before the reign of Alfonso VIII. Ultimately, these are incomes derived from the *tenencia* over a town, a place or any kind of district, that we now know were registered as having been assigned to certain lords, for example the queen, princes, *ricos hombres*, knights, etc. This means that the information supplied by the *Rentas* is vital for knowing about the people who had vassalistic links to the King, and who received their pay, in what is most like what is technically known as fiefs, through the *pheudo temporali* that Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada talked about.<sup>41</sup>

As well as these rights by land (*por tierra*), there were the payments of salaries (*soldadas*). We can ask to what extent the *soldadas* came from the extraordinary resources of the royal treasury. This way it is tempting to establish a scheme or model of the resources and their application. On one hand, there was assignment of money *por tierra* or *en tierra*, as it was also called, and on the other, the *soldadas*, corresponding to the ordinary and extraordinary income respectively, in other words, on one hand, *martiniegas* and rights, on the other money and services, or if you prefer, what came from the *pecho* and what from the *pedido*.

This scheme could be attractive but I fear that it does not correspond to the reality, which was more complicated. In the Courts of Burgos, held in 1315, during Alfonso XI's minority, the royal chronicle stated that *quisieron los de la tierra saber quanto montaban las rentas del Rey; et desde lo sopieron, porque fallaron que eran menguadas, dieron al Rey los diezmos de los puertos que solian aver su padre et sus avuelos, et más tres ayudas, que fuese cada una tanto como una moneda forera, para pagar las soldadas*.<sup>42</sup> In the Courts of Carrión (1316-1317) the conclusion was reached that the King's income (the concept of 1290-1292) was 1,600,000 maravedies without counting the income from the Frontier (Andalusia), which was another million.<sup>43</sup> However, it was that occasion the amount necessary to pay the *ricos hombres* and knights, maintain the castles and the King and officials in the Court<sup>44</sup> was calculated at 9,600,000 maravedies.<sup>45</sup> The resources from the extraordinary contributions possibly made up the lion's share of the income from royal taxation, but the so-called royal *rentas* also continued to be a considerable part.

41. Roderici Ximenii de Rada. *Historia rebus...*: VII, chap. XV.

42. "Those of the land wished to know what the incomes of the King were; and once they knew these, because they found that they were limited, gave the King the tithes of the passes that his father and his grandfathers used to receive, and three grants, each one such as a *moneda forera* to pay the salaries". "Crónica de Don Alfonso el Onceno", *Crónicas de los Reyes de Castilla*, ed. Cayetano Rosell. Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1953: I, 179 (chap. VIII).

43. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. *Fiscalidad y poder real...*: 227.

44. *Crónica de Don Alfonso el Onceno...*: chap. X; see Estepa, Carlos. "La monarquía castellana en los siglos XIII-XIV. Algunas consideraciones". *Edad Media. Revista de Historia*, 8 (2007): 79-98 especially 85.

45. Like the data in the *Rentas* of 1290-1292 the "mrs." in the cited *Crónica* were the so-called war maravedis.



On the other hand, in the part dedicated to Andalusia, the Rentas from 1290-1292 give us a partial insight into the payment of *soldadas*.<sup>46</sup> The essence of this text is the so-called *i. Nómina de la Frontera*.<sup>47</sup> This is a register of different assignments in various places that did not differ much from what we find in the royal income in other regions. However, there is a section with the *soldadas* for the knights of Seville, preceded by those of the *ricoshombres* on the Frontier, as well as assignments to knights in other towns like Carmona, Jerez de la Frontera, Arcos de la Frontera, Niebla, Écija, Córdoba, Jaén, Úbeda, Andújar, Arjona and Baeza. In the section of *Resúmenes de gastos* there is again reference, with the same information, about the *ricoshombres* and knights. As indicated in a point in the final instructions at the end of the section called "i",<sup>48</sup> there is differentiation between the *soldadas* and the things *que non son soldadas*, but what the latter received is also *por que me ayan a servir con caballeros e con armas por ello*.

This may enable us to propose that the money from the assignments *por tierra* could also be used to pay *soldadas*. In an accounts book of *tierras* assigned to various nobles dating from 1288, a total 2,431,133 maravedies were shared out.<sup>49</sup> It seems obvious that with the amounts received, the *ricoshombres* distributed *soldadas*, thus the variations in the amount we see for different people. For example, Prince John received 416,000 maravedies while the Leonese noble Diego Ramírez was given 66,000. These amounts were used to pay *soldadas* to varying numbers of men. Thus, in the summary of expenses in the part of the Rentas of 1290-1292 related to Andalusia, the number of troops is indicated alongside the global amount. For example, Fernán Pérez Ponce received 28,000 maravedies of *soldada* for 23 men in the troop, while Juan Alfonso, son of Prince Alfonso Fernández, received a *soldada* of 48,000 maravedies for 40 troops.

#### 4. The cost of War

The nobles received payments from royal taxation, from money *por tierra* and individualised *soldadas*. It could be said that the nobles received these incomes massively, but given that these same nobles had needs that went beyond their military functions, we do not know, nor is it easy to appreciate, the percentage of the income from royal taxation that was spent on war, and ultimately the answer to the question of how much war cost is pending.

Here it should be noted that while salaries (*soldadas*) to *ricoshombres*, noblemen, knights and others would be a substantial element of what we could call in general terms the Costs of War, there are other aspects involved in the spending on war that

46. Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey...*: I, 391-418.

47. It is followed by paragraphs *ii. Segunda copia de la Nómina*; Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey...*: I, 413; and *iii. Resúmenes de gastos*: Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey...*: I, 414-418.

48. Hernández, Francisco Javier. *Las Rentas del Rey...*: I, 411.

49. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. *Fiscalidad y poder real...*: 322-323.



should be taken into consideration. There was a need for a huge number of horses and beasts of burden with their corresponding provisions. Although these costs could also be paid for by the places an army passed through, the logistic requirements had to be attended to. These were not restricted to the varying needs of the people who participated in a campaign for animals, victuals, clothing and arms, as the above-mentioned passage from Jiménez de Rada suggests regarding the foreign troops and how they had been fully equipped by Alfonso VIII.<sup>50</sup> Transporting men and animals for a longer or shorter time notably increased the costs of war. Machines had to be built, especially siege engines and mobile fortresses, and the costs of repairing castles and fortresses should also be added to all this. In the calculation of the costs of war, the payment of ransoms for prisoners should perhaps also be considered, although this went strictly beyond royal taxation. Furthermore, if everything mentioned was on the Debit side, we must take into account the contributions of booty to the Credit side. All this leads to the idea that the question of the costs of the war must be answered in all its complexity, naturally without questioning the solidity of the *soldadas*.

## 5. Conclusions

The *soldadas* were the essential element structuring the relation between taxation and war. They already were of great importance during Alfonso VIII's reign. For this, the information from the *Rentas del Rey* under Sancho IV (1284-1295), a century later, enables us to value the phenomenon of assigning treasury resources to the nobility and in general to all those who performed military duties.

Thanks to the late 13<sup>th</sup>-century testimonies, we can see that the *soldadas* also meant a redistribution of the resources from the royal treasury and created a wide client network with the King at its head.<sup>51</sup> The nobility were rewarded and could take part in the war, thus strengthening ties with a reinforced royal power thanks to its own participation. This reciprocity should be viewed as inherent to the system or regime in which it developed.

The *Rentas del Rey* under Sancho IV presents a noble framework directed towards and from the monarch. What was the situation under Alfonso VIII? Beyond the importance and validity of the *soldadas* and the other resources of royal taxation, we enter rather hypothetical grounds. It is still necessary to focus on analysing the resources and their distribution from the *tenencias*, but we can start from the idea that, from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, the payment of *soldadas* generated a complex organisational structure that reflected a consolidated monarchy.

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50. Ladero, Miguel Ángel. *Fiscalidad y poder real...*: 8.

51. Arias, Fernando. *Guerra y fortalecimiento del poder regio en Castilla. El reinado de Alfonso XI (1312-1350)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2012: 221.

